



STATE OF IOWA

ISSUE 7

REBUILD IOWA OFFICE (RIO) LEGISLATIVE WEEKLY

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AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF THIS ISSUE AS WELL AS PAST ISSUES
CAN BE FOUND AT:

www.rio.iowa.gov/news/legislative_weekly/index.html

RIO MISSION:

The Rebuild Iowa Office will lead the State of Iowa's efforts to rebuild safer, stronger and smarter in the wake of the 2008 severe storms and catastrophic flooding.

RIO VISION:

We envision a resilient Iowa that will be safe, sustainable and economically strong for its people, reaffirming its ties to the land, rivers, environment and rich cultural history.

CONTACT THE RIO:

502 E. Ninth Street
Wallace Building
Second Floor
Des Moines, IA 50319

Phone: (515) 242-5004

Fax: (515) 242-5006

E-mail the RIO at:
contact@rio.iowa.gov

Visit us on the Web at:
www.rio.iowa.gov

GOVERNOR CULVER, GENERAL DARDIS TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON TO SEEK CONTINUED DISASTER FUNDING

Securing more federal disaster relief funds for Iowans was the top priority of Governor Chet Culver and Maj. Gen. Ron Dardis, RIO Executive Director, on a Feb. 20 trip to Washington, D.C. to visit with Shaun Donovan, Secretary of the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Iowa has been allocated more than \$282 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds but only \$157 million has been made available for the state to access from HUD since last year's record tornadoes and flooding. Once Iowa actually obtains access to CDBG dollars, the funds are distributed on a reimbursement basis by the



Governor Culver and General Dardis's trip to Washington focused on Iowa's need for continued federal support of disaster recovery issues such as housing.

state to various programs that assist recovery efforts such as the Jumpstart Housing Program. Since CDBG funds are not intended to be disaster-relief funds, they come with

a number of restrictions which result in a lengthy and involved process, particularly for disaster-affected homeowners applying for housing

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RIO TO HELP IOWANS TRACK RECOVERY FUNDING MOVING THROUGH THE STATE

The Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO) wants Iowans to know more about disaster funds and how they are being distributed. New charts to be featured on the RIO Web site on Friday detail the movement of more than \$1.5 billion in disaster aid that has been obligated to the state since last year's devastating floods and tornadoes.

These charts, to be accessible on the RIO Web site at www.rio.iowa.gov,

focus on the primary areas of funding Iowa has received for its disaster recovery and rebuilding including funds from FEMA, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, Small Business Administration (SBA) and the state Jumpstart program.

For each specific source of funding, two graphs outline the status of Iowa's progress. The first graph details how much has been

allocated to Iowa, how much has been approved for state and local use and the amount spent on recovery and rebuilding. The second graph focuses on the weekly progress of funds as they are approved and spent.

These charts highlighting more than 15 different sources of disaster aid will be updated at the end of each week and will be made available on the RIO Web site for printing.

HF 64 UPDATE- COMMUNITY DISASTER GRANT PROGRAM

On Feb. 9, Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) sent a letter to eligible cities and counties for participation in the \$22 million Community Disaster Grant Program established in HF 64.

HSEMD initially developed allocations using address data attached to ZIP codes. This method created inaccuracies within the data. For example, damaged homes in unincorporated areas of the county were attributed to cities based on their mailing address and ZIP code. This created instances in which cities that received minimal disaster-related damage were allocated funds for

damages beyond the city's incorporated boundary.

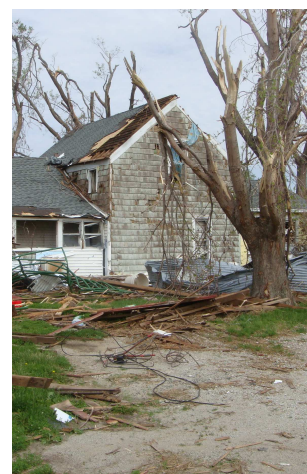
At the request of the legislature, HSEMD began geo-coding all associated data to indicate the precise location of all the damaged structures which participated in either FEMA's Individual Assistance program or Small Business Administration Disaster Relief Programs. This geo-coding process will result in the most accurate allocation of the disaster grant funds.

HSEMD anticipates this geo-coding process to be complete March 10, 2009. Updated allocations will be

available on the HSEMD Web site, www.iowahomelandsecurity.org, on March 11. The Web site will be the only method of notification for the updated allocations.

Applicants should continue to evaluate potential projects during this period so when the updated allocations are received, they will be ready to select projects to undertake with the grant funds. The application due date remains April 1, 2009.

Questions should be directed by e-mail or phone to the Community Disaster Grant staff at cdg@iowa.gov or at 515-725-3231.



WASHINGTON (from page 1)

assistance. Both Governor Culver and General Dardis expressed their frustrations with CDBG limitations and asked for more flexibility in order to expedite the process and access the \$125 million already set aside for the state. Greater flexibility with the CDBG funds would allow money to be delivered directly to struggling Iowans faster, helping them recover from last summer's disasters.

Another issue Governor Culver and General Dardis discussed with officials in Washington involved changing the regulations regarding lead paint abatement. Right now, homes that were built before 1978 must go through this process before homeowners can receive more than

\$25,000 in federal dollars through the Jumpstart Housing program. A change in the current regulation would help place more Iowans back into their homes sooner.

In addition, Governor Culver and General Dardis asked HUD to change its formula and methodology in determining disaster-related allocations of future CDBG dollars to states. The current administration still has \$4 billion in funds to distribute to affected states. In order to accurately reflect the magnitude of disasters in future allocations, all disaster-related needs and impacts should be taken into account.

Governor Culver and General Dardis also met with Tom Vilsack, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Secretary and former Iowa Governor to discuss agricultural needs that came about as a result of the devastating floods and tornadoes of 2008.

As a follow-up to the visits, Governor Culver will be sending a letter to Secretary Donovan and Secretary Vilsack to stress Iowa's needs for continued federal support for disaster recovery. The Governor reiterated his discussions with federal officials and indicated he would be checking back with them for progress and program updates. He also invited HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan to visit Iowa for a first-hand view of the state's recovery progress and examples of what HUD's investment has done for the state's rebuilding efforts.